Bills raised by Bihar Government towards 50% cost of GRP deployed during the given period are as under:—

Rs. in crores

Year	Bils raised
1995-96	0.74
1996-97	4.25
1997-98	11.71
1998-99	9.11
1999-2000	1.82

(c) and (d) Total outstanding payable by Railways to Bihar Government as on 30.6.2000 is Rs. 7.30 cr., which is due to non-submission of Audit certificate.

Increase in Rail Accidents

†1526. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Governments reaction to the news item captioned "Bharat Main rail durghatnain bharhi", published in Punjab Kesari dated 4th July, 2000 and whether Government are contemplating to take any concrete steps in this regard; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) The universally accepted index of train accidents is number of train accidents per million kilometres. This index which stood at 5.5. in 1960-61 has come down to 0.58 consequential train accidents per million train kilometres during the years 1997-98 and 1998-99. On Indian Railways, approximately 65 to 70% accidents are due to Railway staff failure. Railways accord the highest priority to the safety aspect and constantly endeavour to prevent train accidents.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Some of the important steps being taken to prevent accidents are listed below:

(i) The work of track circuiting has been accelerated on the trunk routes and other important main lines.

(ii) Modification of the signalling circuitry is being carried out to minimise chances of human error in causing accidents.

(iii) Walkie-Talkie sets have been supplied to Drivers and Guards of all trains.

(iv) There has been progressive increase in use of Tie Tamping and ballast cleaning machines for track maintenance.

(v) For monitoring track geometry and running characteristics of the track, sophisticated track recording cars, oscillograph cars and portable accelerometers are being progressively used.

(vi) For detecting rail fractures and weld failures, 96 more double rail Ultra Sonic Flaw Detectors are being procured.

(vii) Maintenance facilities for coaches and wagons have been modernised and upgraded at many depots.

(viii) To prevent cases of cold breakage of exles, Routine Over Hauling Depots have been equipped with ultrasonic testing equipment for detection of flaws in the exles.

(ix) Whistle boards/speed breakers and road signs have been provided at unmanned level crossing and visibility for drivers has been improved.

(x) Periodic Safety Audit of different divisions by inter-disciplinary teams from zonal headquarters has been introduced.

(xi) Training facilities for drivers, guards and staff connected with train operation have been modernised inlcuding use of Simulators for training of drivers.

(xii) Refresher courses are regularly organised at specified intervals.

(xiii) Performance of the staff connected with train operation is being constantly monitored and those found deficient are sent for attending crash courses.

(xiv) Periodical safety drives are launched to inculcate safety consciousness among the staff.

Increasing the number of coaches

1527. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the conventional type of coaches are being manufactured in excess of the target since 1991;

(b) if so, their excess number till date;

(c) what is the second class passenger earning, including sleeper class, at present; and

(d) whether such earnings are more than 50 per cent of the entire earnings of Railways; and if so, the reasons for not increasing the coaches of the second class passenger sleeper class?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) In Budget Estimate 2000-2001, the second class passenger earnings, including sleeper class have been Estimated at Rs. 8137.42 crores.

(d) The earnings are not more than 50% of the entire earnings of Railways. However, the induction of second class passenger sleeper coaches is being done as per the requirements of the Railway.

Doubling of Ernakulam-Kayamkulam rail line

1528. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the fund allotted for doubling the Ernakulam-Kayamkulam rail line; and

(b) by when the work is expected to be completed?